

Commercial Aviation

The British Continental Extension

SINCE his return from Sweden Sir Percy Mackinnon, the chairman of British Continental Airways, has stated that the extension from Amsterdam to Copenhagen and Stockholm is likely to be open in May. D.H.86s are being built for the service, which will operate via Amsterdam, Hamburg, Copenhagen, Malmö and Stockholm. Bromma airport is expected to be ready in May.

1936 in the U.S.S.R.

ONE of the most important events of 1936 in the U.S.S.R. will be the opening of a regular passenger service linking Moscow and Vladivostok, a distance of over 5,000 miles. Two branch lines will be included in the scheme, one from Sverdlovsk to Magnitogorsk, and another from Novosibirsk to Kemerovo. The main line was used this year for freight only, while passengers were carried over part of the line only. The service between Moscow and Prague is expected to start in the Spring. In 1936 most of the routes, which will be equipped with wireless and lighting, will be covered by all-metal Stal-3 machines.

The rate of development of civil aviation in the Soviet Union may be seen from the fact that, while in 1923 the air lines extended over a distance of 250 miles and carried 229 passengers, with about two tons of mail and freight, the length of the Soviet air lines now is second only to the United States. About 100,000 passengers were carried last year.

Faster Pan-American Electras

ACCORDING to a report from the Lockheed Company, flight tests have revealed that a batch of three new Electra monoplanes for Pan-American Airways, Inc., are the fastest cruising twin-engined machines in America.

The new model is known as the Electra 10 E., and is powered by two Pratt and Whitney Wasp Senior S3H1 radials giving 550 h.p. at 2,000 r.p.m. for take-off, and 412 h.p. at 1,950 r.p.m. for cruising. Using 450 h.p. at 10,500 ft, the new Electra does 215 m.p.h. It will cruise at 205 m.p.h. at 9,600 ft. with each engine developing 412 h.p.

Pan-American Airways will use the new machines to augment their present services in Alaska, Cuba and Mexico. They carry ten passengers, two pilots, a maximum of 250 gallons of fuel, 420 lb. of mail, baggage and express matter. With such a load the take-off occupies thirteen seconds, and the run is 750 ft. Initial rate of climb is given as 1,200 ft./min. On one engine and with full load the new model maintains level flight and climbs to 9,000 ft. The new type of Lockheed fast-retracting undercarriage, the wheels of which can be raised in 7½ seconds, is incorporated. Western Electric radio equipment is installed, and the engines drive Hamilton constant-speed airscrews and are fitted with automatic mixture controls.

G.A.P.A.N. Officers

AT a meeting of the Guild of Air Pilots held on December 17, 1935, the following officers were appointed for the year 1935-36:—

Master, Capt. The Rt. Hon. F. E. Guest (unanimously re-elected); Deputy Master, Capt. A. G. Lamplugh (Capt. N. Macmillan retiring); Wardens, Messrs. N. W. G. Blackburn, P. W. S. Bulman, E. Fulford, J. Jeffs and A. S. Wilcockson; Treasurer, Major Norman Holden (re-elected); Assistant Treasurer, E. H. Lawford, Esq. (re-elected).

Christmas Records

THE Christmas air mails despatched by the Imperial air services were the heaviest ever carried by air from this country. Those on the England-India-Australia service and the South African service weighed 17,572 lb., or about eight tons, as compared with 12,807 lb. for the corresponding Christmas despatches of 1934—an increase of 37 per cent. Stated in terms of the number of letters carried, this means that approximately half a million letters were included in the Empire Christmas air mails from this country. In addition, 2,357 lb. of parcels were carried, as compared with 2,208 lb. in the Christmas mails of 1934.

New Zealand's First Air Service

THE possibilities of commercial aviation in New Zealand are illustrated by the results achieved by East Coast Airways, which has operated a service for the past eight months between Gisborne and Napier.

Since the commencement in April and until November this company had maintained a 97½ per cent. regularity, had carried more than 2,000 passengers in addition to freight, and was proving increasingly popular. Returns covering the first six and a half months' activities show that the company's two machines made 706 trips out of 724 which had been scheduled. The cancellation of trips, however, was not entirely due to the weather, but was caused by the condition of the aerodrome at Napier. Throughout the period there has been an average load of three persons per flight. The inadequate ground facilities at the Gisborne end have restricted the load, except under favourable conditions, to four passengers, whereas the D.H. Dragons are, of course, designed to carry seven.

An encouraging feature of the service is that the traffic offering has shown a steady increase. Already heavy bookings have been made for well into the New Year. The possibilities of extending the service, perhaps to Auckland, has already received the consideration of the directors of the company, but developments in this direction are dependent upon an improvement to the existing ground facilities at Gisborne and Napier.



HIGH AND DRY: While the Jersey-bound D.H.86 flies serenely on its way, a Dutch freighter makes heavy weather in the Channel. A picture taken last week by a member of the staff of *Flight*.